

# Parkscriptions™

by Recreation Northwest

Get your dose of nature.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION:

**VALUES WE LIVE BY, GOALS TO ACHIEVE  
AND STRATEGIES TO GET US THERE**

*MARCH 2019*



Recreation Northwest requested and received technical assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program ([www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca))

# INCLUSION & ACCESS WORKGROUP

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## Parkscriptions Value Statements: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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**Definition:** Values and principles statements reflect a group's core beliefs, the deep convictions and priorities that shape its culture and spirit, and inspire and guide its choices in the way it operates to achieve its mission and vision. It helps define the operational culture for employees and volunteers, as well as for donors.

**Parkscriptions Vision**

*People from all walks of life enjoy healing and community through nature.*

**Parkscriptions Mission**

*Connect patients with positive outdoor experiences for healthier lifestyles and improved mental and physical health.*

Parkscriptions has two core values, listed below, each with a goal with associated strategies that express and embody those values. The Parkscriptions team will create a detailed annual plan, starting in 2019, that will outline specific action items every year to help us achieve our goals.

### Increase community health through equitable access to the outdoors:

**We believe that everyone should experience what research tells us is true: that being outdoors makes us healthier and happier.** We visit public lands and express joyful enthusiasm about all forms of nature we find, how we recreate—in play and fun, for adventure, with courage to start and finish a challenge—and feel connected with others outside.

**We believe that all people need to feel welcome to go outside and are encouraged to find a ‘dose’ of nature.** In time, these ‘doses,’ or small actions, will improve the health of individuals and contribute to building a stronger community and a sense of belonging.

**We believe that all people deserve to feel safe and enjoy the right to use our public lands.** We want the community that we meet outdoors to reflect the community at large. Working to make Parkscriptions accessible, inclusive, and diverse will help expand the demographics of people using and enjoying our public lands, and can grow advocacy and stewardship for public lands and recreation across multiple demographics.

**We believe that the different ways that communities and individuals experience nature and their challenges in going outside need to be recognized and honored.** Working with diverse members and partnerships, Parkscriptions must be collaboratively tailored to community needs and culture, with the priority on inclusion and access for those who are most vulnerable to health disparities, are “underexposed to nature,” and those who are underrepresented recreating in the outdoors.

**Goal:** More people in Whatcom County, reflecting a cross-section of the entire community, are healthier because of their quality time outdoors.

Strategies:

- Create an inclusive and “contagious” program in the spirit of outdoor play: keep it fun, keep trying new things, and keep it positive
- Develop communication materials that make connections with all Whatcom county residents and visitors about the program and the benefits of time outdoors
- Foster partnerships and programs for access, inclusion, and diversity
- Using the Parkscriptions database, create accessible resources that encourage everyone in the community to visit public parks and open space

### Providing leadership: We value a “shared-commitment” approach to meet community needs

***We believe in the strength of partnerships to meet community needs, especially those communities that are underserved and under-represented. We are dedicated to convening and collaborating with organizations and people within those communities.***

***We believe, as leaders, that in order to provide a vital link for all to the outdoors, we must challenge ourselves to remain open and curious about different cultures and values to better understand our community. In our collaborative process, we are dedicated to creating a welcoming environment and to invite and listen to all voices. We respect and appreciate each culture’s values and beliefs, and are committed to incorporating them into the program in order to make Parkscriptions a rich and beneficial part of time spent outdoors and with nature.***

**Goal:** Whatcom Parkscriptions has a strong track record of collaboratively serving those who are underrepresented, most in-need and most vulnerable.

Strategies:

- Create a more representative leadership, in the Advisory Committee and ad hoc work groups (recruit and retain people of color, people from different socio-economic classes, ages, fitness levels, etc.)
- Provide ongoing training and reflection on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Set measures for accountability and review quarterly

***These two values and their corresponding goals and strategies will be addressed in the annual work plan for Parkscriptions. Refer to our annual work plan for action items that will help us achieve our goals for diversity, equity and inclusion and that evaluate our successes each year.***

# APPENDICES

Appendix #1: Local Jurisdiction Comp & Other Plans: Inclusion/Access in Local Plans

Appendix #2: Other Resources

- Looking at Other Park Rx Programs and Tools
- Tools found for Inclusive Outreach and Community Engagement
- Strategies for Equity and Inclusion Used by Other Non-profits and Organizations

## Appendix #1: Local Jurisdiction Comp & Other Plans: Inclusion/Access in Local Plans

Parkscriptions' first work on inclusion and access was research-focused and looked closely at plans framed by local jurisdictions that address the well-being of the community and health equity. We also looked widely for lessons from other nonprofits and organizations, especially Park Rx programs. The information collected and shared with the Advisory Committee is collected here and provides resources for "getting started" on shaping the Parkscriptions program to reach and serve communities and geographic areas that are most vulnerable to poor health and are underrepresented among park users. Increasingly, local jurisdictions are addressing health and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in their plans.

The National Park Service's national RTCA office recently studied eight DEI city planning efforts. Commonalities between how cities approached/measured DEI seemed to fall within the following categories:

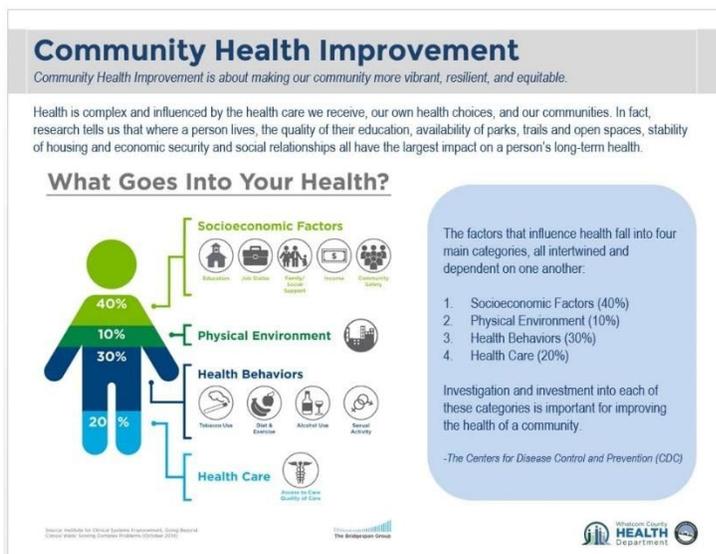
- Age—youth and seniors
- socioeconomic & household income
- race and ethnicity distributions
- elevated crime rates/safety
- densely populated and/or rapidly growing areas
- health behaviors and outcomes

### Whatcom County Plans

#### *Whatcom County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)*

Most Whatcom County plans do not include language for equity/inclusion (e.g. Whatcom Futures), however there is relevant information for Parkscriptions in the Community Health Improvement Plan (2012-2016):

<https://whatcomcounty.us/2930/Community-Health-Improvement-Plan>

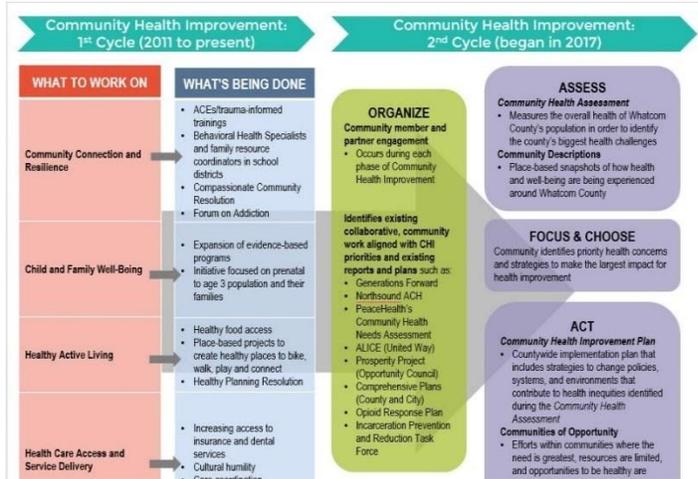


### CHIP OVERVIEW

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is the result of a multi-step, multi-year assessment and planning process sponsored by Whatcom County Health Department, PeaceHealth and St. Joseph Medical Center in collaboration with multiple community partners. It is based off of the Community Health Assessment.

In 2018, another [Community Health Assessment](#) was conducted, and another update of the CHIP will be completed in 2019.

The plan provides a framework to guide community leaders and residents in making decisions about

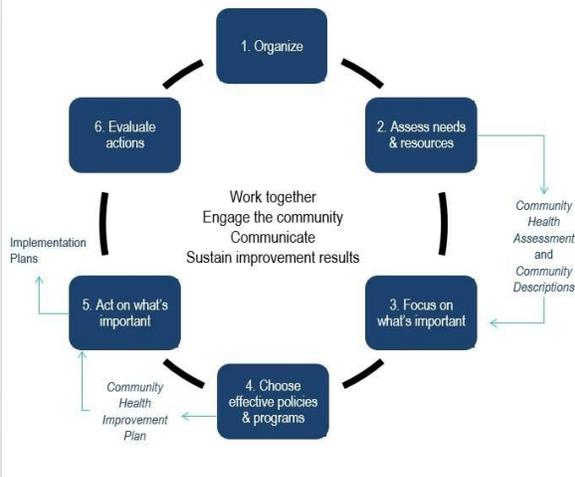


where to invest time and resources to make measurable differences in the health and well-being of the community, and meets health care reform and public health regulatory requirements.

The plan focuses on closing gaps in opportunities and outcomes for vulnerable groups. It defines equity as, “the state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.”

### Community Health Improvement Phases

Community Health Improvement describes the efforts of a community to improve its local health conditions. The process is a long-term, repeating cycle of assessing community health needs, developing appropriate action plans, and mobilizing resources to carry out action plans. The overall goal is to employ local knowledge, community stories, multiple sources of data, and the actions of everyone from community volunteers to elected officials to improve the health of Whatcom County.



#### Seven Principles of Community Health Improvement (CHI)

- **Multi-sector collaborations** that support shared ownership of all CHI phases, including assessment, planning, investment, implementation, and evaluation
- Proactive, broad, and **diverse community engagement** to improve results
- **Shared definition of community** that encompasses both a significant enough area to allow for population-wide interventions and priority areas to address disparities
- **Transparent processes** to improve community engagement and accountability
- Use of **evidence-based strategies** and encouragement of innovative practices through evaluation
- Evaluation to inform **continuous improvement processes**
- Use of **high-quality data** pooled from and shared among diverse public and private sources

“...in order to improve health we must tackle issues of disparities that exist in our community.”

“**Low income, lack of work, limited education, geographic isolation, and minority racial or ethnic background are factors that correlate with less opportunity for good health and higher risk for poor health.**”

### STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

*Improve Health Care Access and Service Delivery:* “Connect people with complex health conditions to needed supports.” Below are the relevant strategic directions for Parkscriptions.

#### GUIDING VALUES

- Collaborate to connect and maintain health and social support systems that are accessible, efficient, accountable, and **culturally relevant**
- Strive for **equity, fairness, and justice** in all that we do  
**Honor diversity and inclusiveness, fostering a sense of place and belonging for everyone**

- Promote **shared leadership** and collective responsibility for the health of our community

*STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: BUILD COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS AND RESILIENCE*

*ASSESSMENT FINDINGS*

- **Whatcom County is growing and becoming more diverse.** People of Hispanic origin currently make up 8% of the population and two federally recognized Tribes (Lummi and Nooksack Tribes) make up 3% of the population (*US Census, 2010*).

Community Assets and Potential Partnerships for Parkscriptions

- Whatcom Family and Community Network—health, education, and social service professionals and community members that serves as the local “community public health and safety network.” Supports community building efforts, partners with Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe, engages Hispanic families, and promotes healthy youth and family activities in targeted neighborhoods and schools.
- ACES Prevention Network—network of community members and professionals engaged in collaborative learning in order to reduce and mitigate adverse childhood experiences and build community resilience.
- Whatcom Prevention Coalition (WPC)—coalition of community partners including school professionals, youth, and families working to promote healthy youth development and prevent substance use and other problem behaviors.

*STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: PROMOTE HEALTHY ACTIVE LIVING: “Create more safe places to walk, bike, play and connect.”*

- **Low income and racial/ethnic minority groups are disproportionately impacted by rates of overweight and obesity and are growing.** They are also more likely to live in less walkable areas with fewer opportunities for healthy living.
- **Unincorporated areas of the county have higher rates of obesity and tobacco use.**
- Bellingham and Ferndale are very walkable, Lynden is somewhat walkable, and all other areas in the county are **car-dependent** (ACHIEVE, 2011).
- Increase the % of low-income and geographically-isolated households that have access to a park, play area, or trail within close proximity to home.

Community Assets and Potential Partnerships for Parkscriptions

- ACHIEVE partners—network of community partners that created *Community Action Plan for Health and Active Living* in 2009-2010.

*STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: IMPROVE HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND SERVICE DELIVERY:*

- Members of the Hispanic/Latino community indicated barriers to accessing care included language barriers, disrespectful providers and staff, inadequate or poor quality treatment and significant bureaucratic or paperwork barriers to accessing care made more complicated by immigration status or lack of documentation.
- Tribal community members identify perceived lack of confidentiality and lack of cultural understanding as barriers to care.

Community Assets and Potential Partnerships for Parkscriptions

- Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (WAHA)—nonprofit connecting people to healthcare by reducing barriers.

—*Whatcom Taking Action for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs*—collaboration of community partners and families improving systems for children, youth, and families impacted by special health and developmental needs.

## City of Bellingham Plans

### *City of Bellingham [Draft] 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan*

The city prepares a “Consolidated Plan” every five years to receive federal block grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that support programs and services for low-income households

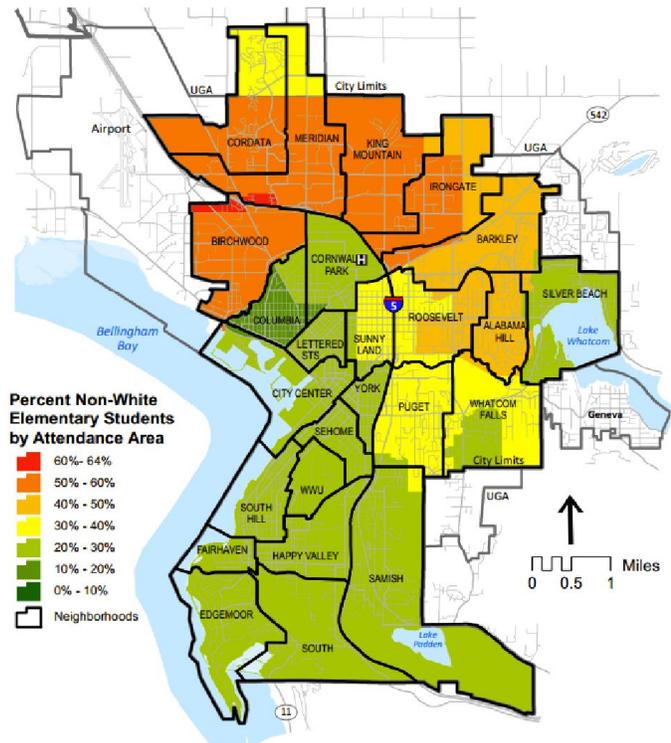
(<https://www.cob.org/Documents/planning/community-development/consolidated-plan/2018-2022-consolidatedplan-public-draft.pdf>). The plan aligns with the city’s “Legacies & Strategic Commitments” (includes Equity & Social Justice, Sense of Place, and Access to Quality of Life Amenities), and it includes key demographic data, priorities that recommend roles for partners, and identifies populations that have the highest needs and are especially underserved:

- People dealing with disability and behavioral health issues
- Homeless single adults
- Single-parent households and families with young children
- Seniors and elderly homeowners
- Victims of domestic violence

The plan notes that poverty is not equal across racial and ethnic groups, and illustrates how it is concentrated in several neighborhoods and corresponds to areas where high numbers of minority families live. Using census tract data for family poverty, and school district data for free/reduced meals and racial diversity at elementary schools, a number of neighborhoods are of concern:

- Birchwood
- City Center
- Cordata
- Happy Valley
- Meridian
- Roosevelt

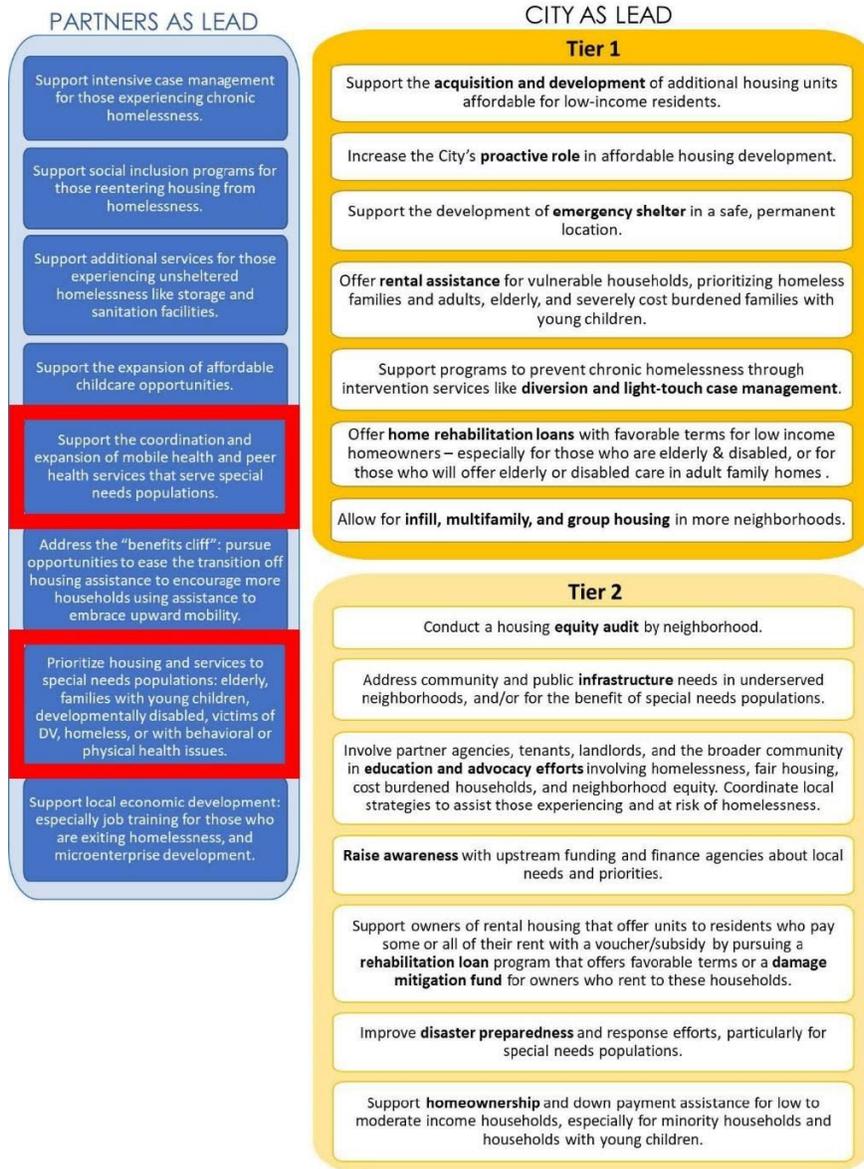
*Map from Consolidated Plan, showing racial diversity of elementary students by neighborhood (data from WA State Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction).*



Take-aways from the Consolidated Plan and potential areas for Parkscriptions' partnership:

- \_\_\_ The plan's data, and identified underserved populations and the geography of need can provide a foundation for Parkscriptions' own inclusion and access plan.
- \_\_\_ The commitment to equity and framework for programs that the city has articulated may provide an opportunity to synchronize development of future Parkscriptions' outreach and programs

Parkscriptions can explore opportunities to partner and create programs that fit several "Partners as lead priorities highlighted on the following "Consolidated Plan" diagram:



**Appendix #2: Other Resources**

Parkscriptions' continued commitment to inclusion and access may be informed by these resource and reference materials that fueled the Advisory Committee's first discussions:

- Take-aways from other Park Rx programs, from inspiration and challenges to data and diversity/equity/inclusion.
- Tools found for inclusive outreach and community engagement
- Strategies for equity and inclusion used by other non-profits and organizations

Some of the strategies and tools used by other organizations, including Park Rx programs, could be adapted to fit the needs of Parkscriptions; in the near term the work may be simply continuing the discussion and answering the question, "What do we do with this information?"

### Looking at Other Park Rx Programs and Tools

#### Take-aways from looking at other Park Rx programs:

- Inspiration from creative approaches and programs in other states that support inclusion and access objectives
- Challenges seen in other Park Rx programs
- Start with baseline demographics to understand community needs and target programs, outreach, education, resources
- A stand-alone Park Rx DEI plan not found yet, but case studies are a resource. The national Park Rx website had a collection of case studies from Rx programs in 23 states available at <http://www.parkrx.org/case-studies>. The work group's full review notes are collected in this document.

## Take-Aways from Other Park Rx Programs:

<i>Inspiration from Other Park Rx Programs</i>	
<b>Activity Programs</b> (Walking; Walk with a Doc [TM]; trained clinic volunteers follow-up with patients/families; multi-cultural events; annual trail challenge; after-school; young adults with disabilities; passes and incentives; walking for pets & people)	<b>Pediatrics and youth</b> (NC; East Bay PD Miami-Dade/UHealth; Portland Rx:PLAY)
<b>Education/promotion</b> (Videos; documentaries; films; partner with organizations serving non-traditional park users; ppt for clinical providers)	<b>Multi- or bi-lingual</b> (Staff [Kaiser]; materials & programs [5 languages in EBRPD and bi-lingual in Santa Barbara])
<b>Metrics &amp; research</b> (NC Rx serial numbers; on-line risk estimator [Walk with a Doc uses ASCVD Risk Estimator Plus]; EBRPD w/SGSU & Latina Center; Miami-Dade w/U of Miami-Pediatrics)	<b>Health equity embedded in mission</b> (Marin City)
<b>Use national programs</b> (Let's Go, Exercise is Medicine, etc.)	

<i>Challenges from Other Park Rx Programs</i>	
<b>Sustaining programs</b> (Chicago PD Park Rx, Iowa Rx for Fitness, and WV no longer found on-line)	<b>Mono-lingual</b> (Materials, promotion, programs)
<b>Patient access to internet required</b>	

<i>Data/Guidance from Other Park Rx Programs</i>	
<b>Collecting agency and regional data</b> (HPHP:BA [CA] important tool for showing impact, building new partnerships, and seeking funding; site surveys help visualize the spread of programming; both quantitative and qualitative data can provide a more comprehensive picture of the impact of programs; open access to collaborative data allows members to take advantage of tool)	<b>ParkRx with closed metric feedback loop</b> (Exploring after basic program established)

<i>Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) from Other Park Rx Programs</i>	
<b>Broaden definition of healthcare advisors</b> (HPHP:BA [CA])	<b>Reduce barriers to participation</b> (Including partners/agencies)
<b>Purpose identifies target audience</b> (To improve the health and wellbeing of all Bay Area residents, especially those with high health needs, through the regular use and enjoyment of parks.)	<b>Targeted partnership strategies</b> (Building relationships with organizations serving nontraditional park users)
<b>Assess needs and resources</b> (Community’s and partner’s)	<b>Tailored ParkRx programs</b> (Well-developed link to park resources in a healthcare setting; developed at local level and unique as community served, with regional collaborative support)
<b>Engage target populations</b> (Starting in pilots with toolkits for healthcare providers, including locally-specific and culturally-appropriate outreach materials [detailed information on specific, accessible, and appropriate park programs]; culturally appropriate park programming; “pull” and “push” effort)	<b>Evaluation processes</b> (Collect data on the reach of programs at the agency and collaborative level through voluntary site surveys by participants; acknowledge metrics of success)
<b>Region-wide system of relevant, consistent park programming</b>	

*New Mexico: Prescription Trails*

The Prescription Trails program is designed to increase physical activity among New Mexico residents, especially those who are completely physically inactive. To accomplish this, the program aims to identify walking venues that are both safe and accessible to patients with diabetes and other chronic disease conditions, walking and wheel chair rolling trails (flat, smooth, paved, wood chipped surface).

1. Encourage healthcare professionals to write prescriptions for park and trail use
2. Provide trail and park information through a printed walking guide and a web-based mapping tool to healthcare professionals so they can effectively prescribe their use
3. Conduct public education about park-based physical activity

The Prescription Trails concept began as a program to write prescriptions for walking to patients with diabetes within a grant funded multi-agency partnership. Its development has continued largely through volunteer efforts by partner agencies and individuals, notably New Mexico Health Care Takes On Diabetes, which manages the Prescription Trails Program in New Mexico.

## Tools Created:

- [ADA park and trail ratings](#) to help doctors prescribe physical activity that would be appropriate for a patient's health condition.
- Standardized Prescription Trails prescription pads designed specifically to convey an austere sense of medical authority. The straightforward design provides areas to indicate the prescribed duration and frequency. There is also space for the practitioner to note specific physical activity locations.
- Prescription Trails walking guide booklets to local "approved" parks and trails, with photos and detailed information about park locations, amenities, and trail ratings.
- Prescription Trails "[walking log](#)" and "walking tips" handouts are available to supplement the patient's prescription.
- Prescription Trails [website](#) with search and map functionality designed to help patients find venues in their neighborhood that are approved by the Prescription Trails program.

They have also incorporated local vets (double points earned) by prescribing walking for pets and people.

### *Oregon: Portland Rx Play*

- PowerPoint presentation for clinical providers
- Concentrates on children ages 6-12
- Rx Play designed to work with existing systems
- Map of parks and rec facilities
- Motivational interviewing technique training for Rx play
- There are a lot of clinical resources and training available online

### *North Carolina: Kids in Park/TRACK Rx*

*Rocio: "I hope we can incorporate some of their strategies for recruitment and retention into Parkscriptions (for example, Track Trail)."*

- Program started in 2008 to improve the health of children, and the health of the local parks by making them safer and more attractive to the community.
- Created in collaboration between the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, National Park Service and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation.
- The program has been built by **partnering with pediatricians and nurses to advertise and prescribe the program**. The TRACK Rx materials are offered in doctor offices and community health care centers.
- Anyone can pick up a TRACK Rx brochure at the doctor's office and can complete the activities suggested in the brochure.
- The **patient needs to register on the website in order to collect points** for every activity achieved; these points can be exchange for prizes. The first prize a patient can get is after online registration. The prize is sent via email to the participant.

- Key for tracking: if the actual prescription (Rx) was given by a doctor or nurse to participate in outdoor activities in nature, or to hike a TRACK Trail, the patient registers their form online. Each form has a **serial number that helps track the prescriptions**.

Another key component of this program is its website, which is **interactive, well-organized and attractive to future participants**

The intention of the program is to be a **national network of family friendly tracks, easy and accessible for everyone**. This is emphasized and promoted on the website.

A strength of TRACK Rx North Carolina is having a **strong network of providers**, mostly pediatricians who make the prescription. Perhaps, something to consider in the future for Parkscriptions.

A **limitation of the website is that is monolingual**. However, it could be accessed in Spanish using the Google translator button, which is included in the website. Nevertheless, the materials are only English. In my opinion, the program has been **built to focus on families that have access to internet and speak English**, as the website must be used to register the prescription.

*“Perhaps, we can learn from what is not included in this program.”*

*Alabama: Birmingham Park Rx*

Online search by park/zipcode

*Alaska: Sitka National Historic Park*

Connecting healthcare system and public lands; fact sheet directs interested people to designated staff with NPS, public health, and community hospital.

*California:*

- Marin City Park Rx: Marin City Health and Wellness Center, Marin City Community Services District, Marin County Parks, Marin County Health and Human Services, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Trust for Public Land
  - ~ Partner leads with equity in mission – Marin City H&WC’s mission addresses health equity (goal focused on African Americans)
  - ~ Health Educator creates individual plans with clients
- East Bay Regional Park District: Park Prescriptions/SHINE(Stay Healthy in Nature Every Day)
  - ~ teamed up with UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland
  - ~ children with chronic illnesses such as obesity, diabetes or ADHD - to the outdoors as a way to improve their physical and mental health
  - ~ Trained clinic volunteers follow up with the patients’ families to schedule their park visit upon recommendation of the doctor
  - ~ first Saturday of every month, the Park District and Regional Parks Foundation provide free transportation, healthy lunch, and a day of fun outdoor activities led by park staff --

For many of the families, this is the first time they have been to a Regional Park or an outdoor recreational environment

- ~ District has also integrated the outdoors into the clinic by installing beautiful park visuals and posters throughout the clinic to inspire and educate families to use their park resources and to get active outdoors. Seven clinic rooms have been named after regional parks
- ~ Videos featuring healthy outdoor activities in the Regional Parks play continuously in the waiting rooms of their nine health clinics. The videos educate and encourage patients and families to be active outdoors in the Regional Parks
- ~ Regional Parks Foundation also provide free transportation to the patients enrolled in their pediatric obesity and adult mindfulness programs
- Healthy Parks Healthy People: Bay Area; A Roadmap and Case Study for Regional Collaboration [http://hphpbayarea.org/sites/default/files/resources/HPHPBayArea\\_Roadmap\\_Case\\_Study\\_2017.pdf](http://hphpbayarea.org/sites/default/files/resources/HPHPBayArea_Roadmap_Case_Study_2017.pdf) . HPHP goals:
  1. Increase the use of parks by those who are at high risk for chronic disease
  2. Make sure that park programs not only encourage physical activity, but also offer social connection and support
  3. Foster stewardship among new park users through park programs
- Santa Barbara County, RTCA project: there was not a full-scale DEI planning effort but inclusion/access was a consideration in the development of the program from the start. One of the **primary target audiences was the Latino community, given income and health disparities across the county**. As a result, the team committed to publish **all materials in English and Spanish** and **engaged Latino Outdoors and Promotores de Salud in promoting and utilizing the program**.

The collaborative accomplishes these goals through two initiatives: First Saturday programs and Park Prescription programs.

#### *Florida: Fit2Play*

Fit2Play is a health, wellness and obesity prevention after-school program. Kids enjoy fun, fully-supervised programming after school with activities focused on fitness, nutrition and wellness, and developing their appreciation of nature, science and the cultural arts, and homework help during the school year. Some park locations host an exclusive Fit2Play program for children and adults with disabilities, ages 6-22.

#### *Idaho: Kaniksu Land Trust ParkRx*

Basic information, list of trails and maps, and encouragement to “talk to your doctor”.

## Indiana

\_\_\_ Indiana Dunes National Seashore Park Prescription Program

On nps.gov, basic information, list of trails and maps, and encouragement to “talk to your doctor” about Rx. Mentions health clinic with disclaimer.

\_\_\_ Exercise is Medicine: Global health initiative managed by American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM); EIM on Campus (many!)

## Maine: *Let's Go (national program on childhood obesity prevention)*

Program partners are State Bureau of Parks and Land and health care foundation, offering passes through clinics for free admission to participate in “Let’s Go” programs at 48 parks and historic sites (2014 reference).

## Wisconsin: *"Prescription Trails", Appleton*

Very limited, no mention of equity or target populations (city website has link to an ArcGIS map with click-throughs to "Rx Trail Link" (park/trail details) and "support documents" for a computer generated route.

## Virginia: [Greater Williamsburg Area Park Rx](#)

- pilot program in the Park Research Lab at the College of William & Mary; an initiative using nature and public lands to improve health
- Uses the tagline "Have You Had Your Dose of Outside Today?"
- Prescribing healthcare providers are called "Park Ambassadors", recruitment of new prescribers starts on-line, and training on benefits of time outside in nature, how to prescribe and use of the searchable database of parks on the Park Rx website
- From article: "While the initiative aims to benefit the community at-large, its **focus centers on those who have trouble accessing the outdoors, who need to get outside to improve their health, or who have conditions that exercise and amenities at a public park could help them to better manage or overcome.**"
- Regional program established on university campus, and has student researchers and "Peer Park Ambassadors"
- Site includes a calendar of free events to be active outdoors

## *Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles*

[Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles: A Health & Wellness Element of the General Plan \(Los Angeles Dept. of City Planning, 2015\)](#) most intentionally linked equity (not just racial equity) and health.

- New plan element provides high-level policy vision to elevate health as a priority for the City’s development, with **health equity a fundamental guiding principle.**
- **Vision.** . . for people of all ages, income levels, cultural backgrounds, geographies; access for individuals with disabilities and across the age spectrum; access to affordable and safe opportunities for physical activity, particularly for park poor communities.

- **Diverse resource teams**, between the "Community Advisory Committee" (non-profit/for profit hospital/health clinics and health councils/associations, Climate Resolve, Chamber of Commerce, housing, homeless healthcare, walk/bike organizations, land trusts . . .), the "Technical Advisory Committee" (every department, from parks and rec to public works, library and the Port) and an "Expert Panel" (researchers/faculty in medicine and urban planning, Prevention Institute, CA Endowment).
- **Data-driven**, with a summary of health issues/outcomes informing policies and goals, and outreach to communities with the most adverse health outcomes (income, education, childhood obesity, proximity/quantity of park space, bike/ped traffic fatalities, emotional/social support, homicide rates). **Use graphics to communicate key data** (e.g. maps of life expectancy, vehicle collisions with pedestrians/bicyclists, park acres/access, and poverty; info graphics of statistics).

### Tools found for Inclusive Outreach and Community Engagement

*Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity (Dec 2016)*

Local and Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity (GARE):

<https://www.racialequityalliance.org/resources/racial-equity-toolkit-opportunity-operationalize-equity/>

*Relevance for Parkscriptions:* The Racial Equity toolkit looks at examples of effective strategies (of which City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative is one, see below) to implement racial equity into decision making processes. It defines a **racial equity tool** as one that:

- Proactively seeks to eliminate racial inequities and advance equity
- Identifies clear goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes
- Engages community in decision-making processes
- Identifies who will benefit or be burdened by a given decision, examines potential unintended consequences of a decision, and develops strategies to advance racial equity and mitigate unintended negative consequences and
- Develops mechanisms for successful implementation and evaluation of impact.

It includes a simple set of questions to evaluate a process for racial equity, available in a worksheet in the appendix. The questions are:

1. Proposal: What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
2. What's the data? What does the data tell us?
3. Community engagement: How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement? (see City of Seattle's process, below)
4. Analysis and strategies: who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?

5. Implementation: What is your plan for implementation?

*Recommendation:* Use this tool to evaluate and transform the Parkscriptions program for racial equity.

*Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide (April 2009)*

City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative:

[https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/ParksAndRecreation/Business/RFPs/Attachment5%20\\_InclusiveOutreachandPublicEngagement.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/ParksAndRecreation/Business/RFPs/Attachment5%20_InclusiveOutreachandPublicEngagement.pdf)

*Relevance for Parkscriptions:* This guide includes strategies, a quick guide, worksheet, public engagement matrix, evaluation template and glossary for an inclusive public engagement process. It is built on three guiding principles—to enhance relationships and engagement, enrich knowledge gathering, and embrace organizational change.

The steps to inclusive public engagement are:

1. Define scope of work
2. Identify stakeholders
3. Define roles
4. Incorporate racially and culturally appropriate engagement activities
5. Create an inclusive public engagement plan
6. Designate a lead public involvement staff, key team member with project manager
7. Communications and outreach
8. Identify and inform decision makers
9. Make sure the process is open and accessible to all stakeholders
10. Evaluate the process

*Recommendations:* Use this guide to create an inclusive outreach and public engagement process for Parkscriptions.

*Washington State Department of Health: Health Equity Review Planning Tool*

In 2014, the WA State Department of Health developed a [Health Equity Review Planning Tool](#). It is designed to help in the initial program planning process.

**Strategies for Equity and Inclusion Used by Other Non-profits and Organizations**

*Intertwine Alliance: Equity & Inclusion Strategy*

The Intertwine Alliance (TIA) is a coalition of more than 150 public, private and nonprofit organizations working to integrate nature more deeply into the Portland/Vancouver metropolitan region (<http://www.theintertwine.org/>). The coalition leverages investments in nature for environmental, transportation, education, recreation, health, economic and social outcomes (they define nature broadly, from backyard gardens, street trees, natural areas, parks). Their vision and founding principles address equity, access, inclusion, and providing for all residents including low income, communities of

color and vulnerable populations. The [Equity & Inclusion Strategy](https://www.theintertwine.org/equity-and-inclusion-strategy) (<https://www.theintertwine.org/equity-and-inclusion-strategy>) is so that “All of our residents and communities benefit equitably from The Intertwine and from the work of Alliance partners.”

The Intertwine was well-established as a regional coalition before shaping its first equity strategy in 2014. The strategy opens describing equity with a vision that “people of all identities and ages are connected to nature . . .” and acknowledging the gap between the vision and the current reality of disproportional access, and structural and cultural barriers for many communities. The Alliance commits to “include, represent and serve the full cultural and demographic diversity of the region.”

Implementation of their initial strategy included:

- prioritizing equity as an issue requiring a broader effort for their sector
- training for staff and partners, and expanding to support co-horts of partners and regional peer learning workshops for [parks] directors
- an organizational assessment
- strengthening internal practices and policies, including increasing the diversity of board and staff.

Equity is not a single project but an ongoing process and TIA is now building on lessons from their efforts so far, both internally (board and staff) and externally (in role of convenor and connector):

- Recognizing all types of inequity, and leading with racial equity to target efforts enough to be effective while affecting change in other areas
- Internally
  - ~ Equity and inclusion awareness and practice in all Alliance processes and programs (continual learning, equity lens for project conception and review, technical support to partners, equity questions on project progress reports, etc.)
  - ~ Sustain a diverse board and staff
  - ~ Monthly meetings for staff to deliberate on TIA’s equity work, and an advisory “Core Group” for discussion of strategy and key decisions to support the board and staff
  - ~ Build stronger relationships with at-need communities and create a coalition whose membership reflects the diversity of the region.
  - ~ Leadership on equity through communications (website, newsletter, blog, summits).
- Externally
  - ~ Identify and use the coalitions leverage points (project leader meetings, annual summit, forums, communications, vision, metrics)
  - ~ Promote conversation on the intersection of racial, sexual, and gender inequities; making change in one affects change in the others and can result in broader successes and benefits everyone.

- ~ As relationships with underserved communities grow, connect community organizations with partners to facilitate and support collaborations between both on a regional initiative.
- ~ Initiate projects and programs that support partners working together to advance equity objectives in the region.
- ~ Create an ongoing learning community among partners focused on diversity, equity and inclusion; bring to scale the work across a diverse group of organizations and transform the members' sectors (adapt and sequence to fit each organization, training in the history of racism before organizational assessment, co-horts of organizations at same stage and of similar size, etc.)
- ~ Commitment by top leaders is essential.

See related blog posts for perspectives from Alliance members on their own or the coalition's work on equity (for example <https://www.theintertwine.org/outside-voice/examining-everything> and <https://www.theintertwine.org/outside-voice/reaching-out-mycelia>).

*National Park Service Framework for Relevancy, Diversity & Inclusion*

National Leadership Council, RDI: Fostering and Engaged and Highly Effective Workforce, 2015\*

This document is an internally-focused framework or "sales pitch" for increasing relevancy, diversity and inclusion in the NPS workforce. It states, "In the National Park Service, the term Relevancy, Diversity and Inclusion (RDI) defines both a value and a practice for connecting the public to the National Park Service's mission and fulfilling our obligation to steward our nation's natural and cultural heritage." It defines the RDI work as "the deliberate, systemic inclusion of diverse and contrasting perspectives and viewpoints to create innovative, meaningful, and lasting results."

The framework includes information for using data to measure results, defines key terms, and provides guidance to empower employees through change in the work place and strong leadership.

*Earth Justice:* <https://earthjustice.org/about/dei-plan-2018>

Earth Justice has a comprehensive diversity, equity and inclusion plan that lays out internal and external organizational goals for 2018. They focus on work to recruit and retain multi-culturally sophisticated employees and to build a stronger culture of inclusion. Externally, they work to diversify clients, partners, donors and supporters to ensure that they are serving all communities impacted by environmental issues.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Each year they assess their objectives, summarize what they accomplished and assign a rating to each outcome in a "report card." View the 2017 Report Card at:

<https://earthjustice.org/about/dei-plan-2017>

*Forefront:* <https://myforefront.org/about/diversity-inclusion-statement>

Forefront adopted a diversity and inclusion statement in 2010, as well as a set of principles advocated as part of a campaign called the Diversity in Philanthropy Project. That project has been succeeded by a [national comprehensive action plan called D5](#).

*Stand.Earth:* <https://www.stand.earth/about/equity>

In 2015 Stand launched an organization-wide Equity and Inclusion Program. Starting with board and staff trainings, they grounded their team in key concepts and frames like implicit bias, white supremacy, and the many interwoven ways in which racism and oppression operate in our culture and society, from internalized stereotypes and interpersonal bigotry to institutional policies and practices that continue to perpetuate injustice in our world. With that foundation, they conducted an organizational culture and climate review. This resulted in a comprehensive report that surfaced their equity strengths, weaknesses, issues, gaps, and needs. A thoughtful review of this report by all board and staff members resulted in the creation of Stand's Equity Committee and a plan for building a more equitable organization.

*The Praxis Project:* <http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/praxis3.pdf>

This resource is a tool to build diverse community based coalitions. It offers a set of questions to map potential allies, and advice for making a plan, "making the pitch," defining your comfort zone, and confronting conflict. It also features a set of good ideas such as conducting a power analysis, moving meeting locations, building skills and capacities, and making policy. Lastly, it offers a worksheet for assessing community resources.

*Engage, "Community Partnerships: A Self-Assessment Toolkit for Partnerships":*  
<http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/engage.pdf>

This resource helps planners "get community participation right," and features self-assessment tools for each step of the process in order to reach a broader audience and create deeper, more meaningful partnerships. It has a series of different exercises and assessment tools to help identify issues and create a valuable engagement process for lasting partnerships. It includes a list of symptoms, if your engagement process has gone wrong, with a list of exercises to help address issues. It has many tools for including community in decision-making processes, and techniques for evaluating success along the way.